



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

28th September 2026



Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls



CONTEXT: Over 2,000 citizens write to CJI to stay SIR, start suo motu proceedings on EC conduct.

Background

Curious case of Goa: 97 eligible voters names deleted from electoral roll.

- **By law** – electoral roll of **each Assembly constituency** is prepared by its **Electoral Registration Officers**.
- **Gradual centralisation of the electoral roll database (ECINet)** – centralised control of the software was taking the electoral roll out of the EROs' hands.

Objections to Form 6 change through the SIR framework: form new voters have to fill

- **It asked applicants to choose one of three statements:**
 - whether their name appeared in electoral roll during the last SIR held in the early 2000s.
 - whether the name of a parent or grandparent appeared in that roll.
 - whether neither their name nor that of their parents appeared in it.
- section itself was not marked mandatory, but **applicants could not proceed to submit the form without answering it.**
- **Concerns:**
 - **Requires Government approval:**
 - could not be done **without amending the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960**, notified by the Centre.
 - **Right to vote belongs to the individual:**
 - a person qualifies by age, citizenship and residence, **not by whether their parents made it through the last revision.**

- **SIR – 13 crore names dropped** from the list (30 States and Union Territories), inserting such a question puts a **shadow on their children** as well.
- Form did not explain what would happen **if they chose the third.**

- **West bengal SIR deletions:**
 - Commission told the court that there were **38 lakh appeals pending before the tribunals:**
 - 22.21 lakh filed by deleted voters seeking to be restored.
 - **Scale of backlog** (19 tribunals decided only 1,26,194 appeals) – ECI to seek court permission to **increase the number of Tribunals from 19 to 42.**
 - **Unauthorised filing** of 16 lakh appeals **against inclusion of voters in West Bengal** – without the knowledge or authorisation of the two Election Commissioners and the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer.
- **Violation of 2023 Act mandate:**
 - requires business to be transacted as far as possible unanimously, but where the CEC and other Commissioners differ, the matter is decided by majority.

Need for SIR:

- **Foundation of Free and Fair Elections:** ensuring electoral integrity
- **"one person, one vote" principle**
- **Fulfills the ECI's constitutional mandate**
- **Addresses Demographic Shifts:** rapid urbanization and internal migration



28th September 2026

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- ensuring that migrant populations are correctly enrolled in their new places of residence.
- **Strengthening Public Trust in Elections**

Challenges and Controversies

- **Issue of Timing:** done right before elections in Bihar, and now in Tamil Nadu, Kerala & West Bengal.
- **Power to determine Citizenship:** ECI has **no power to determine citizenship**, and only the Home Ministry has OR Foreigners Tribunals constituted under the Foreigners Act, 1946.
- **Lack of machine readable voter list:** 2003 electoral roll – to verify the presence
- **Risk of Disenfranchisement of Genuine Voters:**
 - Around **22% of names in Telangana** and **19.5% in Karnataka** have reportedly been struck off.
 - **Right to Information Reveals: West Bengal** – barely 82,000 appeals decided by 19 tribunals – 90% of those decisions favouring electors seeking restoration.
- **Lack of Transparency:** ECI has **not published the elector-to-population ratio** for states under SIR, despite this being mandatory.
- **Burden of Proof Shifted to Citizen**
- **Misuse of Form 7 (any voter in a constituency to object):** objecting to the inclusion of another person's or one's own name on the electoral roll on specific grounds such as death, duplication or shifting of residence.

Way Forward

- **Use deduplication software :** to identify duplicate names in the electoral roll.
- **Involvement of Local bodies:** to identify voters who had migrated or were dead.
- **Participatory approach:** a mandatory social audit for electoral roll revision and verification.
- **Electoral roll in machine readable formats**
 - convert all State/UT rolls into a fully searchable digital format, using English as the standard for searchable data and metadata.
- **Upholding 2023 Act mandate**
- **Transparent Mechanism:**
 - Data – **elector-to-population ratio** should be released
- **Follow due process:** *Form 7 application is received*
 - BLO – conduct physical verification of the voter's address and eligibility.
 - **In cases of death,** verification involves **confirmation signatures by three neighbours** and a death certificate.
 - **If the voter is found absent,** the BLO must make three physical visits to confirm whether the person has shifted. The concerned voter is then issued a notice for a hearing.

Mains Practice Question

"Accurate electoral rolls are essential for ensuring universal adult suffrage. In this context, evaluate the challenges posed by SIR 2.0. Critically analyse the way forward to ensure that the exercise remains inclusive, transparent, and free from exclusion errors."

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Long wait for justice as pendencies in rape cases mount

CONTEXT: Rape cases have remained steady since 2018, but pendency has grown, with less than 2% ending in conviction in the same year as the trial.

Vital Stats

- **Acc. to National Judicial Data Grid:**
 - **Supreme Court** – Over 86,700 cases are pending
 - **High Courts** – over 63.3 lakh cases
 - **District and subordinate courts** – 4.6 crore cases

Rape Cases & Judicial Delays in India:

- **Rape cases since 2018:**
 - average of 84 cases per day
 - nearly three cases per hour
- **Low Conviction Rate in rape cases – below 30%**
- Where cases do result in conviction, the waiting period is generally long.
- **Low Same-Year Convictions** – 2% of rape cases.

CHART 1: Nearly 30,000 cases of rape were reported in India since 2018, averaging to around 80 rape cases a day

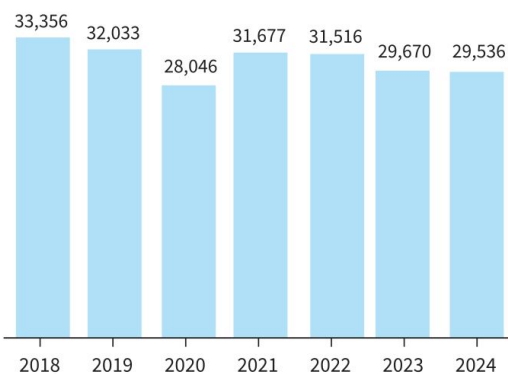
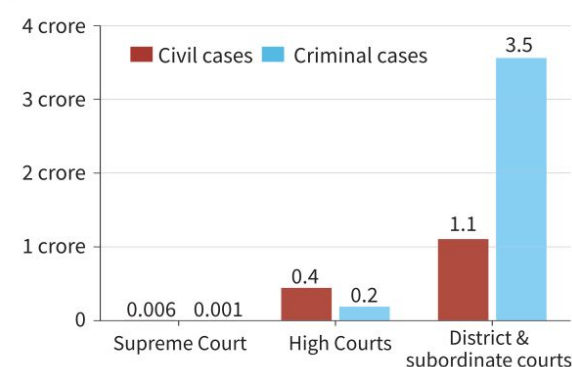


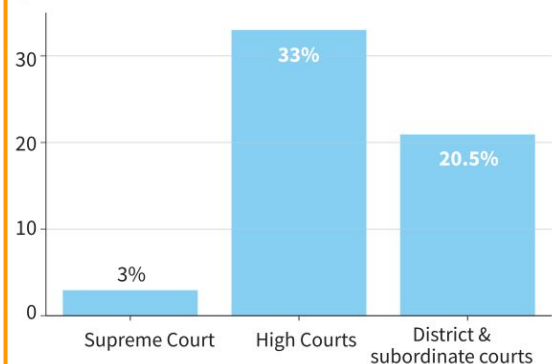
Chart 1: Number of pending cases across courts in crore, as per latest data



Reasons

- **Shortage of Judges:**
 - functions at just **79% of its capacity** (Out of 26,927 sanctioned posts, **5,665 are vacant**)
 - At full sanctioned strength – **19 judges per 10 lakh population** v/s 1987 **Law Commission's recommendation of 50**.
- **Less working days:**
 - SC works 188 days/ year
 - **Malimath Committee** – 206 days
- **Adjournment culture:**
 - no clear timelines for filings, witness examinations, or hearings.
- **Filing of Frivolous Cases:**
 - Supreme Court imposes ₹5 lakh fine for 'frivolous' PIL challenging Charles Darwin's and Albert Einstein's conclusions.
- **Government Litigation:** Accounts for **50% of pending cases** (tax/land or Service disputes).
- **Delays in Evidence Collection:** Lack of forensic labs and slow investigations prolong trials (E.g., Aarushi Talwar Case).

Chart 3: The % of vacant posts of judges across courts, as per latest data



Long wait for justice as pendencies in rape cases mount

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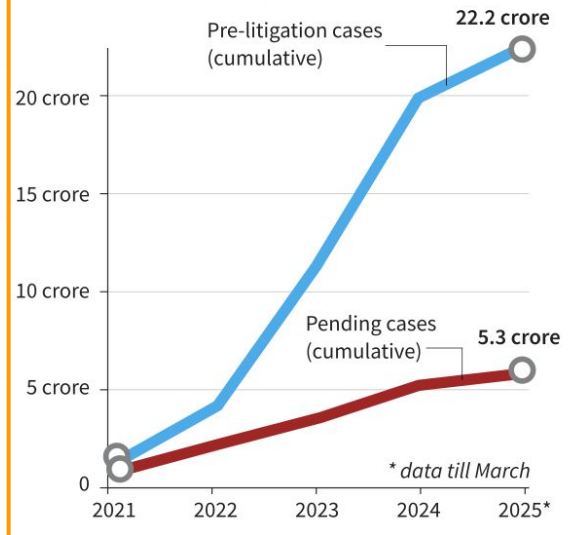
Impacts

- **Affects Constitutional rights:**
 - **Article 21** – Hussainara Khatoon case (1979) recognised the right to a speedy trial.
 - **Article 39A:** To secure equitable access to justice for all
- **Black Coat Syndrome**
- **Weakens Rule of Law**
- **Overcrowded Prisons:**
 - **Prison Statistics 2020:** undertrials accounted for **76% of the total inmates** in around 1,300 prisons.
- **GDP Loss:** Judicial delays cost **1.5% of GDP annually** – Bengaluru-based DAKSH's State of the Indian Judiciary report, 2016.
- **Judicial evasion:**
 - petitions questioning electoral bonds were filed in 2018 – judgement in 2024.

Steps Taken

- **E-Courts Project**
- **Fast-Track Courts:** December 2023, 757 FTSCs including 411 exclusive POCSO (e-POCSO) Courts.
- **National Litigation Policy (2010)** – aimed to reduce government cases.
- **Encouraging Alternative Dispute Resolution**
- **Financial Penalties on Frivolous Litigation:** Discourages meritless cases
 - **Supreme Court imposes ₹5 lakh fine for 'frivolous' PIL** challenging Charles Darwin's and Albert Einstein's conclusions.

Chart 4: Cumulative number of cases disposed of in National Lok Adalats during the last four years



Way Forward

- **Timely appointment of judges**
- Supreme Court even suggested **using retired judges as ad hoc appointees in High Courts**
- **Split the Supreme Court into Two Divisions:** The Tenth Law Commission – Constitutional Division and the Legal Division
- **Increase the number of Workdays:** **Malimath Committee** – 206 days
- **Encourage ADR mechanism:** civil and commercial disputes
- **Establishment of All India Judicial Service**

Mains Practice Question

“Judicial delays in India not only undermine public trust in the legal system but also impose significant economic and social costs. Critically examine the causes of judicial delays in India and suggest comprehensive measures to address the issue.”

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 6

The paradox of de-Sinification in global production

Context: SpaceX's reported efforts, in July 2026, **to remove Chinese-made components from its supply chain** capture a new phase in the restructuring of global production.

Two-Way De-Sinification

- **Foreign firms:** Attempt to reduce their dependence on Chinese suppliers and capabilities.
- **Chinese firms:** Attempt to internationalise their production ecosystems.
- Both face the same fundamental challenge: **ecosystems are difficult to reproduce outside their original location.**

Why?

- **Beyond Final Assembly:** Global supply chains are no longer about **where a product is assembled.**
 - Increasingly, the focus is on the **suppliers, technologies and capabilities embedded deep within production networks.**

The "Ecosystem" Problem: Foreign firms trying to reduce dependence on China face difficulty because China offers a dense network of:

- Component suppliers, Skilled labour, Engineering capabilities
- Logistics networks, Production relationships
- These interconnected capabilities are difficult to replicate elsewhere.

China's Own De-Sinification: Chinese companies expanding overseas face the **reverse challenge:** reproducing China's industrial ecosystem abroad.

- Companies such as **BYD and XPeng** (EV manufacturers) need to decide whether to:
 - Take existing Chinese suppliers abroad,
 - Develop local suppliers, or
 - Combine both approaches.

"Moving Factories" ≠ "Moving Ecosystems" - Industrial Ecosystems Are Sticky

- They are built through **years of repeated interactions**, not merely contracts.
- They involve:
 - Supplier relationships, Specialised skills, Logistics, Tooling and production knowledge & **Rapid supplier response to changing designs and production volumes.**
- Hence, replacing one Chinese supplier does **not automatically remove dependence on China's wider production ecosystem.**

Is China-Plus-One strategy a threat to China?

China's Industrial Capabilities Are Also Evolving

- China is simultaneously reducing its dependence on foreign technology.
- **CXMT**, for example, has emerged as a **major DRAM chips producer** while still relying on foreign chip making equipment.

China-Plus-One strategy & India's Opportunity:

- beginning to attract parts of production ecosystems previously concentrated in China.
- **Japan's TD.K** expanding battery production in Haryana.
- **Murata Manufacturing** expanding its electronic-component manufacturing presence in India.

The opportunity is therefore not merely to attract **individual factories**, but to build interconnected industrial capabilities.

India needs domestic suppliers capable of meeting: *Factories are mobile; industrial ecosystems are not.*

- **Cost and quality requirements**
- Reliable delivery standards
- Efficient logistics
- Skilled workforce requirements
- Access to critical inputs.



Should voting be a fundamental right?



Syllabus: Prelims: Polity

Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No.** 8

The report also found that 97 eligible voters from Goa were excluded from the electoral roll after the centralised ECINet software prevented ground-level Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) from reversing decisions. More concerning, the consequences extend beyond the loss of voting rights. Reportedly, several State schemes use electoral rolls to establish eligibility, including the Goa Mediclaim Scheme. The scheme covers super-speciality treatments unavailable in government hospitals, such as dialysis, angioplasty, open-heart surgery, transplants, chemotherapy and cochlear implants, and is available only to State voters. This issue has once again cast a spotlight on the 'right to vote', the foundational processes of India's electoral machinery, and the genesis of India's 'universal adult suffrage' (UAS).

Election Commission & Electoral Roll Concerns

- An investigation reported **internal objections within the Election Commission** regarding alleged unilateral changes to rules, voter additions/deletions and centralised data access.
- **97 eligible voters in Goa** were reportedly excluded from electoral rolls due to issues with the centralised **ECINet software**.
- Such exclusion can affect not only voting rights but also access to **government schemes linked to electoral rolls**.

India's constitutional promise of the 'right to vote' differs significantly from that of many Western democracies. Reflecting the flawed belief, espoused by thinkers like J.S. Mill, that voting should be reserved for the "enlightened", countries like the U.K. initially restricted the franchise to male property owners. Universal male suffrage emerged only in 1918, and women were granted the 'right to vote' a decade later in 1928. In the U.S., although the 15th and 19th Amendments extended voting rights to African Americans (1870) and women (1920), systemic barriers such as poll taxes and literacy tests continued to disenfranchise many for decades thereafter.

- **Article 326** – granted every adult citizen the 'right to vote', regardless of gender, caste, religion, education, or property. (**inclusive democracy**)
- **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)** –
 - established democracy as part of the 'basic structure' doctrine.
- **Legal Framework:**
 - **RPA, 1950** → electoral rolls and their preparation/revision.
 - **RPA, 1951** → elections, candidature and electoral offences.
- **Initial Hurdles:** Chief Election Commissioner **Sukumar Sen**
 - enrolling 173 million **illiterate voters**
 - **democratic breakthrough** – introducing election symbols.



Should voting be a fundamental right?



Syllabus: Prelims: Polity

Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 8

What is the legal status of right to vote?

- Legal status of the right to vote has **been debated**.
- **Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India (2006)** – Constitution Bench of SC treated the right to vote as a **statutory right**, linked to Section 62 of the RPA, 1951.
- **Two-judge Bench in Rajbala v. State of Haryana (2015)** described it as a **constitutional right**, larger bench ruling in Kuldip Nayar prevails.
- **Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India (2023)**, the Court did not reopen the issue, noting that it had **already been settled by the larger Bench in Kuldip Nayar**.
- Even though it is not a fundamental right, courts have regarded the **'right to vote' as an inseparable part of democracy**.

Why do we need accurate poll rolls?

- **Free and fair elections & "one person, one vote" principle.**
- **Section 19 of the RPA, 1950** – which mandates that any citizen **aged 18 or above, "ordinarily resident"** in a constituency and not disqualified, is entitled to be registered.
 - **"Ordinary resident"** implies a genuine, continuous presence, **not a temporary stay**.

"Substantial versus isolated" binary:

- Courts have consistently held that **only substantial and systemic errors** that **demonstrably**

"materially affected" the election outcome can compromise the **sanctity of the electoral roll**.

- **Minor mistakes** or isolated disenfranchisement are **insufficient**.
- **Recent Goa episode** complicates this: *97 eligible voters were dropped from the rolls*:
 - **ECINet software** denied **Electoral Registration Officers** the authority to reverse erroneous deletions.
- **Administrative inertia followed**:
 - EROs reportedly flagged the anomalies to the Commission by email, yet the **corrections were not restored**.
- **Lakshmi Charan Sen v. A.K.M. Hassan Uzzaman (1985)**:
 - Largely illiterate and politically unaware electorate, parties should take steps to ensure eligible voters are included, and ineligible ones are removed.

What lies ahead?

- 'Right to vote' ought to be elevated from a statutory guarantee to a fundamental one.
 - Would **not diminish the EC's authority to purify rolls**
 - Would instead subject that authority to the **heightened standard of judicial review** reserved for fundamental rights.
- Democracy where **software now mediates the relationship** between the voter and the ballot.



28th September 2026

Syllabus: Prelims: Polity

Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 7

About RTI

- **Background:** The RTI movement by **Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan**, and judicial emphasis on RTI (**i.e. State of U.P. v Raj Narain, 1975**), compelled the Parliament to enact the **Right to Information Act in 2005**.
- **Aim:** providing citizens the right to secure access to information under control of Public Authorities .
- **Article 19:** Right To Information is **derived from the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression** under Article 19 of the Constitution.
- **Coordinating agency:** Department of Personnel and Training under Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- **Institutional framework:**
 - **Central and State Information Commissions:** to oversee its implementation and address appeals regarding non-disclosure of information.
 - **Central Public Information Officers (PIO) or State PIO:** in every public authority to provide information to persons requesting for the information under this Act.
- **Applicability:** Public Authorities, including all authorities:
 - **established under the Constitution**
 - **any other law** made by the **Parliament or a State Legislature**
 - It also includes **bodies owned, controlled or substantially financed** by the Central/State Government.

- **non-Government organisations** substantially financed (directly/indirectly) by the Central/State Government also fall within the definition of public authority.
- **Time Frame for Providing Information:** Within 30 days of the request; for matters concerning life or liberty, it must be provided within 48 hours.
- **Appeals:** Citizens can appeal against decisions of PIOs if their requests are denied or inadequately addressed.

Section 24 of RTI

- Certain Central Intelligence and Security Agencies are exempt from mandatory disclosure
 - IB, RAW and its Technical Wing, CBI) ED etc.
- Information pertaining to the allegations of **corruption and human rights violations** shall **not be excluded**.
- Every notification issued shall be laid before each **House of Parliament**.
- **Rationale:** to safeguard national security, sovereignty, intelligence operations, and law enforcement capabilities, areas **where disclosure could compromise operational effectiveness or international relations**.

Section 24(4) – allows state govt. to exempt Intelligence and Security Agencies established by them.

- Every notification issued **under sub-section (4)** shall be laid before the **State Legislature**.
- **Information sought for -allegations of violation of human rights:**
 - information shall only be provided after the approval of the State Information Commission.



28th September 2026

Syllabus: Prelims: Polity

Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 3

'DIGITAL ARREST'

GRAPHICS

What exactly is 'Digital arrest'?

- New **cyber fraud**
- Accused video call and **pose as law enforcement agency officials**, like CBI or customs officials
- They give threats of **arrest in the name of fake international parcels of banned drugs**
- **Organised economic crime** operated by cross-border crime syndicates



- **Cyber fraud technique** in which criminals **psychologically trap a person online**, making them believe they are under arrest or investigation and coercing them into transferring money.
- **Involves cyber criminals posing as law enforcement agents** (from the CBI, Narcotics Department, or Reserve Bank of India) who **claim that the victim is involved in illegal activities** like movement of drugs or a suspicious package. The victims are tricked into remaining under constant visual surveillance via **Skype or other video conferencing platforms until the criminals' demands are met**.
- The victim is **not physically detained**, but is **mentally confined through fear** – hence the term *digital arrest*.

Operation Chakra-VI

Operation Chakra-VI has focused particularly on **digital arrest scams** and the financial infrastructure supporting cyber fraud.

In June 2026, the CBI deployed **60 special teams** and conducted coordinated searches across 16 states. Investigators found networks involving **shell companies and mule bank accounts**, which were allegedly used to launder proceeds of cybercrime.

In September 2026, the operation was expanded further, with searches at **89 locations across 20 states** in three digital-arrest cases.



Adjournment sine die



Syllabus: Prelims: Polity

Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 7

About Adjournment Sine Die:

- **Adjournment sine die** means terminating a sitting of Parliament for an indefinite period i.e. without naming a day for reassembly.
- The power of adjournment sine die lies with the **presiding officer of the House**.
- He can also call a sitting of the House before the date or time to which it has been adjourned or at any time after the House has been adjourned sine die.

Adjournment	Prorogation
1. It only terminates a sitting and not a session of the House.	1. It not only terminates a sitting but also a session of the House.
2. It is done by presiding officer of the House.	2. It is done by the president of India.
3. It does not affect the bills or any other business pending before the House and the same can be resumed when the House meets again.	3. It also does not affect the bills or any other business pending before the House. ¹³ However, all pending notices (other than those for introducing bills) lapse on prorogation and fresh notices have to be given for the next session. In Britain, prorogation brings to an end all bills or any other business pending before the House.



28th September 2026

Q1. Regarding the legal status of the 'Right to Vote' in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court has held that the right to vote is a fundamental right guaranteed under Part III of the Constitution.
2. In *Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India* (2006), a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court treated the right to vote as a statutory right.
3. In *Rajbala v. State of Haryana* (2015), a two-judge Bench described the right to vote as a constitutional right.
4. In *Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India* (2023), the Supreme Court reconsidered and overruled the position laid down in *Kuldip Nayar* regarding the nature of the right to vote.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: b

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the Right to Information Act, 2005:

1. The right to information is derived from the Fundamental Right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 of the Constitution.
2. The Department of Personnel and Training is the coordinating agency for implementation of the Act.
3. Central and State Information Commissions are responsible for providing information requested by citizens under the Act.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a

Q3. Consider the following statements with reference to "Digital Arrest", often seen in the news:

1. "Digital Arrest" is a legally recognised procedure under Indian law that allows law enforcement agencies to detain a person through video calls in exceptional circumstances.
2. Fraudsters involved in digital arrest scams often impersonate officials from agencies such as the police, CBI, ED, RBI, or telecom authorities.

3. Victims are typically coerced into transferring money or disclosing sensitive financial information under the pretext of investigation.
4. The Government of India has clarified that no law enforcement agency conducts arrests or investigations through online video calls.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: c

Q4. With reference to the Parliament of India, consider the following statements:

1. Adjournment of a House terminates the sitting of the House for a specified period, whereas prorogation terminates a session of the House.
2. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha have the power to prorogue their respective Houses.
3. On prorogation of a House, all bills pending before it automatically lapse.
4. An adjournment sine die does not bring a session to an end, unless the House is subsequently prorogued.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 4 only
- b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: a

Q5. Consider the following statements with reference to the term 'De-sinification', often used in the context of global trade and supply chains:

1. It refers to the process of reducing excessive dependence on China as a source of imports, manufacturing or critical supply-chain inputs.
2. It necessarily implies complete economic decoupling of a country from China.
3. Policies aimed at diversifying supply chains across multiple countries can contribute to de-sinification without necessarily reducing the overall volume of global trade.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a





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